

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA
Newport News Division

Exhibit 28

BOBBY BLAND, et al.

Plaintiffs,

v.

**B.J. ROBERTS, individually and in his
official capacity as Sheriff of the City of
Hampton, Virginia**

CASE NO: 4:11-CV-45

Defendant.

DECLARATION

I, William M. Wheeler, having direct knowledge of the information set forth below, hereby depose and declare as follows:

1. I was employed as a deputy sheriff in the Hampton Sheriff's office from approximately March of 2009 to the end of 2010. I served as a jailor. Jailors did not have arrest powers and did not serve as law enforcement officers.

2. I worked for the Hampton Sheriff's office during the sheriff's re-election campaign in the fall of 2009.

3. The Sheriff's senior subordinates coerced employees to sell tickets and/or buy tickets to campaign fundraising events and to otherwise support his political campaign for sheriff.

4. It became well known within the office that political loyalty to the Sheriff was a condition of employment for all employees, including relatively low-ranking employees. High-ranking officers within the Sheriff's office would say to lower-ranking employees, "Be sure you are supporting the right person," and "It is in your best interest to support the Sheriff." It is clear to me that these statements were intended to coerce

support for the Sheriff and that there would be adverse consequences for not doing so.

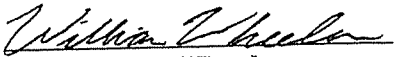
5. I attended a meeting during the 2009 fall campaign season at which the Sheriff spoke. While I did not make notes of what the Sheriff said, nor did I record it, to the best of my knowledge, and as closely as I can remember, he made a statement to the following effect:

I am going to have this job as long as I want it. My train is the long train. I will be Sheriff until I don't want to be Sheriff. If you want to get on the short train with the man I fed for sixteen years, you're going to be out of here. This is a bad economy, and people are knocking down my door for these jobs.

It was clear that the Sheriff's main point was that if you did not support him, and he found out about it, you would be terminated.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing statement is true and correct.

DATE: 7/25/11


William M. Wheeler